

**Case 3239*****Geostiba* Thomson, 1858 (Insecta, Coleoptera): proposed conservation**

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**Abstract.** The purpose of this application is to conserve, under Article 23.9.3 of the Code, the prevailing usage of the generic name *Geostiba* Thomson, 1858 for a widespread and well-known genus of Holarctic and Oriental rove beetles (family STAPHYLINIDAE, subfamily ALEOCHARINAE). The name is threatened by very limited use since 1952 of the senior objective synonym, *Evanystes* Gistel, 1856.

**Keywords.** Nomenclature; taxonomy; STAPHYLINIDAE; ALEOCHARINAE; *Geostiba*; *Geostiba circellaris*; rove beetles; Holarctic; Oriental.

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1. Gistel (1856, p. 387) established a genus of rove beetles (now placed in family STAPHYLINIDAE, subfamily ALEOCHARINAE) and named it *Evanystes*. He included eight nominal species in the genus, among them *Evanystes circellaris* (Gravenhorst, 1806). This name was originally published in the binomen *Aleochara circellaris* Gravenhorst, 1806 (p. 155). Gistel did not designate a type species for the genus *Evanystes*. Blackwelder (1952, p. 163) subsequently designated *Aleochara circellaris* Gravenhorst, 1806 as the type species of *Evanystes* and listed *Evanystes* as the senior synonym of *Geostiba* Thomson, 1858.

2. Thomson (1858, p. 33) established a rove beetle genus and named it *Geostiba*. He included only one nominal species, *Homalota circellaris*, in the genus. Although he did not cite the author of this name, Thomson clearly had in mind *Aleochara circellaris* Gravenhorst, 1806, which has been accepted by subsequent authors as the type species by monotypy of *Geostiba* (see Article 67.7).

3. Although the name *Evanystes* is a senior objective synonym of *Geostiba*, it is the name *Geostiba* that has had prevailing usage. To the best of my knowledge, the name *Evanystes* was not used after its original publication until Blackwelder (1952) designated the type species of *Evanystes*. Since Blackwelder (1952) the name *Evanystes* has had some limited use in Eastern Europe, mostly by L. Ádám and his colleagues (e.g. Ádám, 1996).

4. On the other hand, the name *Geostiba* has been used by more than 10 authors in more than 25 works (e.g. Pace, 1977; Seevers, 1978; Lohse & Smetana, 1988; Zerche, 1988; Assing & Wunderle, 1996; Assing, 1999; other records of use have been submitted to the Commission Secretariat). A search of the *Zoological Record* database for the years 1978–2001 produced 39 papers by 16 authors who used the name *Geostiba* as a valid name.

5. The Code seeks to preserve the stability of established names by ensuring that a younger name in prevailing usage is not displaced by an older but little used name

(see Article 23.2). However Article 23.9.1 cannot be automatically applied in the present case as the senior synonym, *Evanystes*, has been used as the valid name for this group of rove beetles by Blackwelder (1952) and a few others.

6. The genus *Geostiba* currently includes about 350 species and subspecies, which are distributed in the Holarctic and Oriental regions. In this situation, strict application of the Principle of Priority and use of the senior synonym *Evanystes* over the junior name *Geostiba* would greatly destabilize staphylinid nomenclature.

7. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary power to suppress the generic name *Evanystes* Gistel, 1856 for the purposes of the Principle of Priority but not for those of the Principle of Homonymy;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the name *Geostiba* Thomson, 1858 (gender: feminine), type species by monotypy *Aleochara circellaris* Gravenhorst, 1806;
- (3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *circellaris* Gravenhorst, 1806, as published in the binomen *Aleochara circellaris* (specific name of the type species of *Geostiba* Thomson, 1858);
- (4) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology the name *Evanystes* Gistel, 1856, as suppressed in (1) above.

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